

Sir

York 16th May 1821. I-15

I return you General Porters letter, which I have read— however much you might feel induced from courtesy or private friendship, to lend your aid as an individual to any measure not entirely unwarrantable for restoring the Girl to her master, I can by no means advise you to think of interfering in the manner you speak of in your letter, or rather in the manner in which General Porters agent appeared to think you might interfere for you seem by your letter to have little doubt that you have no power to do so. — By a particular Statute of our own passed 1798 provision is made for authorising the apprehension of felons, and persons charged with Crimes of a high nature escaping from any of his Majestys other Colonies in America into this — and transmitting them to the Country they fled from, Tho' that provision is not by that act extended to any independent State, yet in cases of felony, at least of an atrocious nature, I have no doubt a Criminal escaping from either country into the other (speaking of the United States & this province) would be apprehended and committed till ^{he} could be sent for.

But this case is altogether of an other description — If this Girl is regarded as having been an absolute Slave of General Porters, her escape from Slavery is no Crime for which she can be apprehended in this Province, where she is free and entitled

entitled to the protection of the law the moment
she arrives in it. — If on the other hand, she
is to be regarded as an indentured apprentice, she
has merely violated a civil contract, and can
no more be seized and sent back, than a creditor
who has broken good. — Our own experience
every day teaches us that when our apprentices,
and runaways of all descriptions (I need not, I fear,
even exclude criminals) can manage to make
good their retreat to the United States of America,
or into Lower Canada, we have nothing to do, but
put up with the inconvenience —

I am &c. &c.

(Signed)

J. B. Robinson

To.
Thomas Dickson Esquire
Lunston —